

pass this bill to name the building at 600 East First Street in Rome, Georgia, the Harold L. Murphy Federal Building and United States Courthouse.

REWARDING BIG OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, today and tomorrow House Republicans are bringing the Strategic Production Response Act to the floor, a bill that forces the administration to open up even more public lands and waters to drilling any time the President releases oils from the reserve in order to lower consumer gas prices.

Now, what House Republicans are doing is effectively ending the President's authority to lower consumer gas prices while handing over our public lands and waters to Big Oil.

You might wonder why Republicans are pushing legislation that clearly hurts the American people and consumers.

To put it plainly, they are simply crossing another item off the wish list of Big Oil. It is a simple payback to the political campaign donors. This legislation is not needed. It is fabricated. It is based on a lie.

Time after time, year after year, the fossil fuel industry lobbies to control and lock up more of our public lands and waters, and it often comes at the expense of surrounding environmental justice communities.

I say it is built on a lie. There are 9,000 permits on public land effectively for Big Oil to be able to drill, access, and extract. There are 2,000 that are not being used. There are 2,000 permits on our oceans and waters that at this point 75 percent of those permits are not being used, which already affords them the opportunity to extract.

Frontline communities in this country carry a legacy of dumping activities that have endangered both the health and the quality of life of these communities.

Sadly, Big Oil has a well-documented and troubled history of concentrating their polluting projects, such as pipelines and refineries, in environmental justice communities, including communities of color, poor communities, Tribal communities, communities without political representation and a systemic discrimination in terms of the burden they carry. All of this is documented. It is documented in higher air pollution rates in those communities, water pollution and contamination, premature death, higher incidence of cancer, and other diseases that affect these communities more than any other.

Yet, Republicans, once again, stand ready to do Big Oil's bidding this week. If Republicans actually are interested in helping American families in the communities overburdened by oil industry pollution, they would support the Environmental Justice For All Act.

We have been working on the Environmental Justice For All Act for over 3 years. It was developed and shaped directly by EJ communities during an extensive engagement process.

This Act has many components, but it's based on a simple principle: All people have the right to clean air, clean water, and healthy local environments. For too many across our Nation, these rights are not yet realized.

The provisions in the Environmental Justice For All Act are about credible, equitable access to parks and outdoor activities and opportunities for underserved communities.

Federal agencies will be required to meaningfully, under NEPA, engage any communities prior to any decision when proposing actions affecting an EJ community and it strengthens Tribal consultation and input opportunities.

The bill strengthens and restores civil rights protections for communities long facing greater environmental hazards on the bases of race, color, or national origin.

The bill brings transparency, coordination, and accountability from Federal agencies when they carry out activities affecting frontline communities.

I was proud to work with Representative McEachin, who left us far too early, to develop the Environmental Justice For All Act. His legacy on this issue, is his compassion that he brought to it, his strength that he brought to it, they continue to be the legacy and the motivation to secure environmental justice and work for this legislation.

I am proud to say that Representative BARBARA LEE will now join as co-lead on the Environmental Justice For All Act this session, and now the legislation will be called the Donald McEachin Environmental Justice For All Act.

We are talking about basic rights. We are not talking about anything extravagant, anything that is not proven by fact. These communities have been burdened time and time again by industry.

The legislation that we will be seeing today and tomorrow brought forth by the Republicans opens the door once again to unchecked, unmonitored and unprotected actions that will negatively continue to affect these communities.

The environment, climate, the need for remediation, and the need for involvement by all communities, and the resolution of the issues we face around climate change requires that the environmental justice community long left off the discussion, long-ignored in the history of this Nation, in the siting of projects and activities that have hurt those communities and those families, needs to be at the table.

If my Republican colleagues indeed want to reward Big Oil for their support that they have given them, it is time that they include all communities.

BORDER SECURITY AND CRIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Madam Speaker, for too long, the Biden administration has surrendered control of our Nation's southern border to members of the cartels and other bad actors who seek to do this great Nation harm.

This inaction by the Biden administration has allowed an untold number of illegal migrants, drug smugglers, and human traffickers to cross into our country with ease.

Many of these illegal entrants bring anarchy to our streets by committing violent crimes and help fuel America's drug crisis by smuggling in dangerous narcotics such as fentanyl.

Since Joe Biden has taken office, over 4.7 million illegal immigrants have been apprehended at our southern border, representing a 500 percent increase in border crossings since 2020.

While many have been apprehended, thousands of migrants have evaded capture by Federal authorities, including 70,000 known got-aways in December of 2022 alone.

These migrants remain unaccounted for, and now are free to roam the streets of our cities and towns, endangering the lives of innocent Americans.

In fact, earlier this month, four migrants who were bused to New York from the southern border were arrested on Long Island after stealing thousands of dollars in merchandise from a store in my district.

Thanks to the hard work of the Nassau County Police Department they were apprehended. Unfortunately, in New York, Democrats have put criminals ahead of law-abiding citizens and those individuals were released once again to wreak havoc on our communities.

While I am glad that these thieves were captured, local law enforcement should not be forced to deal with the end result of Joe Biden's failed border policy.

If President Biden is serious about securing our border and preventing migrants from committing crimes, like what happened in the Fourth Congressional District of New York, he would stop underfunding Customs and Border Protection and treat our Border Patrol agents the way they should be treated and provide the agency the resources it needs to secure our borders here in America.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I fully intend to hold the President and Secretary Mayorkas accountable for their disastrous open border policies and seek solutions that safeguard this great Nation.

CRISIS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.